

The Daily Worker and the Khrushchev Speech

An Editorial

YESTERDAY THIS PAPER had its say on the terrible revelations on the crimes committed against innocent people in the Soviet Union during the lifetime and under the inspiration of Joseph Stalin.

Today we want to say some small part of what is on our minds about our own attitudes toward the Soviet Union and toward many of our fellow Americans during those Stalin years.

We were wholly ignorant that these crimes had been committed, yet there was reputable evidence had we but listened. How then explain our consistent denunciation of many people as "enemies" of the workingclass because they condemned these crimes?

We were wrong, terribly wrong. We extended the

proper and laudable sympathy for the world's first socialist state, and its defense against the monopolists and fascists who would destroy it, to a stupid and arrogant condemnation of those who told the truth about the violations of justice in the Soviet Union.

We did not want to believe these crimes could occur in a socialist state and so we refused to believe. What was unforgivable and inexcusable was the manner in which we passed judgement—harsh and sometimes vindictive in tone—on many of our fellow Americans based solely on their criticism of the Stalin rule. We thus helped to force many to equate these injustices with socialism itself, and to create disillusionment in the noble ideas of socialism.

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THE KHRUSHCHEV SPEECH

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What of today and of tomorrow? Is there reason—the question is being asked and we must face it—why our fellow Americans should listen now to what we say, and shake our hands in friendship?

In full consciousness of the end to which our blindness led us and the responsibility which we bear for the divisiveness and bitterness we helped to bring about, we say that there is.

We remain proud of our championship of the right of the Soviet peoples to create their socialist state in peace. We are happy for them in their accomplishments.

We are proud of the 30-year history of this paper—a pioneering history, a trail-blazing history in many instances, a history of devotion to the interests of the American working man. Scottsboro, the Trenton Six and Willie McGee, unemployment relief, jimcrow in baseball, industrial unionization, world disarmament. You name the struggle that has meant most to the people of this country from year to year and you have the issue on which this paper has fought the good fight for the people's rights.

We are proud that we speak for socialism. We are proud that, until the people of this country are ready to see that socialism is the answer to depressions and injustice, to great wealth and great poverty, we will speak out as we always have, to right every wrong and champion every democratic cause that can be won under the present economic system.

And there are many wrongs to be righted. The cloud of thought control still hangs heavy over our land. The Smith Act, Taft-Hartley, McCarran Act—they are daggers poised at the throat of democracy. Jimcrow, anti-Semitism flourish in the land. Storm clouds of economic crisis gather as the jobless auto workers line up, in familiar pattern, before the relief offices of Detroit.

We have our place within this people's movement for a more democratic America.

It is within its ranks that we must prove, anew, our right to be heard with respect, not merely for what we did yesterday but for what we are doing today.

We intend to so prove.